



Photo by Caryn Levy  
Bernie Kosar in his natural habitat: fading back to pass.

## Kosar an 'up-and-passing' star

By Kevin Warneke

Bernie Kosar steps up behind center, takes the snap and fades back to pass.

Whoa! Hold it! Wait a minute! Just who is Bernie Kosar?

Whether Nebraska fans know it, the fate of the No. 1-ranked Huskers could depend on the passing arm of Kosar.

The redshirt freshman assumed the signal-caller position for the Miami Hurricanes after a highly contested battle with sophomore Kyle Vanderwende.

Miami Coach Howard Schnellenberger said he isn't surprised by Kosar's progress during his red-shirt year.

"He didn't just sit around, he worked and learned," Schnellenberger said. "He was on the 'cab' squad and ran our opponents' plays. It was no surprise he did what he did."

But as Schnellenberger said it was no surprise, Kosar admitted that he never expected to be the heir apparent for former Miami quarterback Jim Kelley's position.

"I wasn't really behind him (Kelley)," Kosar said. "I was way behind him. While he prepared for a game, I was just concerned with learning the offense."

After securing the starting position, Kosar was welcomed to college football in a 28-3 thrashing by the Florida Gators behind about 74,000 fans.

"The Florida game was a humbling experience," Kosar said. "We had eight other guys who were playing their first game. We played badly against Florida, but there were a lot of positive things that happened."

Kosar rebounded from the early-season loss and led the Hurricanes to a 10-1 record and an Orange Bowl invitation against Nebraska.

During the season, Kosar completed 201 of 327 attempts, for 2,329 yards. His yardage fell 74

yards shy of Kelly's single-season passing record. The only black mark in his statistics was that he rushed for negative yards.

"I guess I'm not the quickest guy on foot," the 20-year-old Boardman, Ohio, native said.

As the Orange Bowl matchup approaches, Kosar said he is trying to withstand the pressure that goes along with playing Nebraska.

"We started talking about playing in the Orange Bowl the week before the West Virginia game, but we took it one game at a time," Kosar said. "The game is a few weeks away. We're thinking about it, but it's not worrying us."

Both Kosar and Schellenberger agree that the Hurricanes will have to go for broke in order to defeat Nebraska.

"You can't be conservative," Kosar said. "You have to go with what the defense will give you."

Schnellenberger agreed, adding that the Hurricanes' offense is far from conservative because it is pass-oriented.

"We throw the ball down the field more than most teams," he said. "We run the Dolphin's (Miami's professional team) offense."

Whether Kosar performs well against the Huskers remains to be seen, but Schnellenberger said he has a quarterback that promises to be a star of the future.

"He's going to continue to improve because he's always seeking to improve," Schnellenberger said. "He'll be a much better player as a senior than he is now. He has unlimited potential."

While the future may be bright, Kosar said, he is staying close to reality.

"I haven't thought about professional football and I don't really get too worked up over awards," Kosar said. "It's not that he doesn't like them, he said, but for now, he's getting ready for the Huskers — and whatever happens, happens."

## Faith, hard work bring Hurricanes victory at last

By Jeff Browne

The Miami Hurricanes may have a short drive to play Nebraska in the Orange Bowl, but the road to the Jan. 2 game was anything but easy.

After being routed by the Florida Gators in their opener, the Hurricanes seemed destined to fulfill the dour prophecies of Florida's sportswriters.

Before the season began, the Miami Herald asked the state's writers to predict what type of year the Hurricanes would have. Only one writer was able to forecast the 10-win season that Coach Howard Schnellenberger and Miami fashioned.

Only a few writers even predicted that Miami would win as many as seven games. Hurricane Sports Information Director Ron Steiner said he didn't believe the doom predictors, although he could see their reasoning.

"We were supposed to be rebuilding," he said. "We'd lost (All-American quarterback) Jim Kelley and some other really good players, so they figured that we'd just have fun this year and go at it for keeps next year."

Schnellenberger said he never doubted his team's ability, he just wasn't sure when it would become apparent to everyone else. But when the Hurricanes left the field a 28-3 loser to Florida, both Schnellenberger and his players felt they had reached that point.

"We played a really fine second half against Florida," Steiner said. "After the game, the kids weren't depressed or worried. They just said to themselves that they knew they could play with anybody."

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